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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to obtain normative data on self concept (S) and ideal-self concept (I) congruence for the Interpersonal Check List (ICL) (Leary, 1957) and to examine differences in self concept, ideal-self concept, and S-I congruence between a variety of groups with different functional roles. The ICL was administered to a sample consisting of five groups: 121 graduate counselor trainees, 307 senior teachers-in-training, 25 priests, 67 high school students, and 64 army officer cadets. T tests were used to determine whether significant differences existed between discrepancy scores of males and females within groups. To determine whether overall differences between groups were significant, a one-way analysis of variance was used. The priest group obtained highest mean S-I discrepancy scores and therefore were least congruent. Counselor trainees and army officers were most congruent, differing significantly from priests. Counselor trainees were significantly more congruent than teacher trainees and high school students. Group S-I discrepancies on the 16 individual dimensions (interpersonal variables) were also calculated. Findings support the idea that there are conceptual similarities between vocational interest and personality and that vocational choice is the implementation of self concept and self-regard. (Implications are discussed. Normative data for the ICL self and ideal-self concepts is appended.) (JS)

CONGRUENCE AND PERSONALITY

A Normative Study of Counsellors and Teachers
in Training, Priests, High School Students
and Army Officer Cadets

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The self concept (S), which consists of the perceptions an individual has of himself, and the ideal-self concept (I), which contains personal aspirations, have been viewed as important referents of human behavior (Combs and Snygg, 1961; Lecky, 1945; Horney, 1942; Rogers, 1959; Wylie, 1968). The degree to which perceptions of self and ideal-self are in agreement with one another (as reflected by an S-I discrepancy or correlation) has been traditionally referred to as self-ideal (S-I) congruence (or discrepancy).

The meaning and importance of S-I congruence as a personality variable has been a subject for popular debate for almost two decades. In simplest terms high S-I congruence has been equated with self acceptance. In addition, a number of studies have suggested that a linear relationship exists between S-I congruence and adjustment. Rogers (1951) and Butler and Haigh (1954) found that S-I congruence increased during psychotherapy and such changes were accompanied by improved adjustment. Turner and Vanderlippe (1958) found that college students with high S-I congruence participated more in extra curricular activities, attained higher scholastic averages, received higher sociometric ratings and appeared better adjusted on the Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey, than students with low S-I congruence. Further support for a linear relationship between S-I congruence and adjustment has been reported by Chase (1957), Chordorkoff (1954), Crandall and Bellugi (1953), Eastman (1958), Friedman (1957) and Smith (1958).

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In contrast, Block and Thomas (1955) have expressed reservations about viewing a person whose self concept and ideal-self concept closely match as being well-adjusted. They have presented findings which suggest that individuals with high S-I congruence have rigid and overly integrated personality structures. Furthermore, they have suggested that the relationship between S-I congruence and adjustment is curvilinear (inverted U). Cole et. al. (1967) and Zuckerman and Monashkin (1957) have also found that moderate S-I congruence is more indicative of adjustment.

Since adjustment and performance may be logically linked, S-I congruence has been investigated as a variable for predicting performance in various settings. As was the case with S-I congruence and adjustment, a certain amount of disagreement exists in drawing inferences about performance from the magnitude of a given S-I discrepancy. For instance, Waterland (1965) found no significant relationship between S-I congruence and counsellor performance. Vellutino (1964) concluded that the relationship between S-I congruence and the ability to make a "good" decision is curvilinear. Hay (1966) observed that engineering managers with high S-I congruence were more effective than managers with low S-I congruence. Park and Eberlein (1969) found that counsellor trainees with moderate S-I congruence were more flexible than counsellor trainees with either high or low S-I congruence. As well, Eberlein and Park (1969) have reported a significant curvilinear relationship (inverted U) between S-I congruence and performance of counsellor trainees as rated by their supervisors. Contradicting Turner and Vanderlippe's (1959) findings, Matheson (1969) found that high school students with low S-I congruence were higher achievers than students with high S-I congruence.

It seems apparent that despite some lack of consensual agreement about meaning, the concept of S-I congruence has proven to be a fruitful personality variable and thus merits further systematic investigation. It is also apparent, however, that most of the studies which have concentrated on concepts of self have utilized different instruments and different equations for generating scores which reflect congruence. The result of these divergent approaches to the study of S-I congruence has created a situation wherein the individual researcher is left puzzled about how representative are the congruences in his particular sample. There also appears to be a dearth of information about what facts, if any, are concealed by global S-I congruence scores which have been calculated from a large number of personality traits. That is to say, it is quite possible that two individuals (or groups) can have equal S-I congruence scores while having different scores on the dimensions which comprise self and ideal-self concepts. The present study was undertaken to obtain normative S-I congruence data for the Interpersonal Check List (ICL) and to examine differences in self concept, ideal-self concept, and S-I congruence which might exist between a variety of groups with different functional roles.

Method

Sample

The sample in the present study consisted of the following five groups:

(1) Group one consisted of 121 counsellor trainees who were registered in the University of Alberta Educational Psychology counselling practicum between 1967 and 1969. Most of the trainees were in the first year of the Masters Degree program in Educational Psychology or in a related graduate diploma program. This group included 36 females and 85 male trainees.

(2) Group two consisted of 307 teachers-in-training who were registered in a senior undergraduate University of Alberta Educational Psychology course concerned with classroom social dynamics. This group was mainly composed of students whose teaching experience was limited to one practicum course; a significant minority, however, were teachers who were returning to university to upgrade their qualifications. The teacher group contained 185 females and 122 males. ICL data was collected from four sections of the course offered in 1968 and 1969.

(3) Group three consisted of 25 Alberta priests who were registered in a three day pastoral counselling seminar in May, 1968.

(4) Group four consisted of 67 Grade X students from Summerside, Prince Edward Island, in May, 1968. The students were volunteers and represented 67 per cent of the grade X population. This part of the sample included 41 females and 26 males.

(5) Group five consisted of 64 male Canadian Army Officer cadets who were attending a leadership training program in Manitoba in the summer of 1969. The cadets were students registered in degree programs at various Canadian universities.¹

Self Concept and Ideal-Self Concept Scores

The Interpersonal Check List (ICL) (Leary, 1957) was used to obtain measures of self concept and ideal-self concept. Each group of trainees was first given a "set" to respond to each of the 134 ICL adjectives or phrases for the purpose of reporting self concept: "This is how I see myself." They were then requested to re-do the instrument using a second "set" to measure their ideal-self concept: "This is the way I would like to be." As each ICL item has been assigned an intensity weight, S and I scores were obtained on 16 dimensions by summing intensities for items checked "true" for each trainee. ICL octant scores were obtained by combining adjacent 16's in accordance with Leary's theory (1957). Further scores on four dimensions were obtained from a factor analysis of responses made by all subjects in this study (Eberlein, 1969). To determine S-I congruence a vector analysis technique measured the distance between the 16, 8, and 4 S dimensions and the similar I dimensions.²

Analysis

Since the priests and army cadets included only male Ss there was a question as to whether or not their S-I discrepancy scores would be comparable to S-I discrepancy scores obtained from the other groups containing both male and female Ss. T-tests were therefore used to determine whether or not significant differences existed between the discrepancy scores of males and females within each of the other three groups. As only small and non-significant differences were observed, Ss' scores were not separated according to sex for further analyses on the congruence data.

In order to determine whether or not the overall differences between groups were significant a one-way analysis of variance procedure was utilized to compare means. Table 1 reports both the significant F ratio obtained and the results of a Scheffe analysis, along with mean S-I discrepancies of each of the five groups.

Results and Discussion

The magnitude of the S-I discrepancy is inversely related to congruence. The priest group obtained highest mean S-I discrepancy scores and therefore they were least congruent. On the other hand, counsellor trainees and army officer cadets were the most congruent, both differing significantly from the priests. In addition, the counsellor trainee group was significantly more congruent than teacher trainees and high school students.

While it has been traditional to interpret findings on the basis of "global" congruence scores, the authors felt that subtle differences between groups might be made clearer by examining group S-I discrepancies on individual dimensions. For each group the S-I discrepancy for each of the sixteen dimensions was calculated. These were ranked in terms

of their contribution to the global S-I discrepancy score (Table 2). The trait for which the greatest S-I discrepancy was observed was given rank "1"; the trait which contributed least to global discrepancy received rank "16". Part A of the table reflects traits where self scores were higher than the ideal; Part B reflects ideal scores higher than the way the group saw themselves at present.

While the present paper is primarily concerned with S-I congruence as a personality variable, Tables 3 - 7 present normative data on each of the ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimensions.

Two questions about these results seem pertinent for discussion:

1. Are these results supportive of previous research on S-I congruence theory?
2. Do these results have implications for the relationship between personality and vocational choice?

As was mentioned earlier, high S-I congruence has been traditionally treated as being synonymous with self-acceptance, while low S-I congruence has been linked with self-rejection and self-deprecation. Similarly, it has been generally accepted that low S-I congruence is associated with difficulties in adjustment, while the meaning of high S-I congruence is less clear. When applied to the groups in the present study and using the linear model, these findings suggest that the army officer cadets and counsellor trainees are more confident, less self-deprecating, and probably less conflicted about personal matters than the priests.

Independent support for the above interpretation is noted in the following remarks by Siegelman and Peck (1960) about army officers and ministers:

The officer appears to have confidence in his ability to achieve his goals, and he looks for the most favourable environmental conditions to support his efforts. Perhaps inner security and stability permit and facilitate energy investment in external issues and an adequate personally acceptable job of coping with his problems. (p. 321)

The minister is more "introverted" than the military officer....Insecurity and anxiety about personal qualities are indicated and there is a searching desire to critically scrutinize his abilities. One possible reason for this emphasis on personal shortcomings might be a need for attention, acceptance, and approval which he unconsciously attempts to elicit by his honest, self-derogatory remarks. (p. 219)

To a lesser extent similar inferences might be extended to describe the counsellor, teacher, and student groups with respect to where they fall on the S-I congruence continuum.

The student group represents a population which is less committed to a particular vocation. Previous research by Bloom (1961) has indicated that S-I congruence increases with age (until age 59, after which it begins to decrease). Since adolescents typically are viewed as experiencing anxiety over interpersonal, social and sexual problems it should not be surprising that the high school student group obtained the second highest mean S-I discrepancy scores.

The relatively low S-I discrepancies of the counsellor group could be a favourable sign. Byrne (1966) has suggested that individuals with low S-I discrepancies favour avoidance-denial defensive modes, while individuals with high S-I discrepancies are more likely to display intellectualization and sensitization defensive styles. Bales (1970), in his recent discussion of personality types, has suggested that it is characteristic of individuals given to avoidance-denial defense sets to possess the power of being able to alleviate anxieties in others. To

have such a talent would seem desirable in many counselling situations. On the other hand, an extreme usage of avoidance-denial defences could lead to lack of flexibility in personality structure (Block and Thomas, 1955) which would handicap counselling process development. This raises the possibility that counsellor trainees may be, in general, overly integrated individuals who seek security in a rather non-threatening environment away from classroom frustrations or business pressures by working with less secure individuals than themselves. The authors suspect, however, that a largersampling of vocational populations would uncover a variety of occupations which attract individuals with more rigid personalities and hence lower S-I discrepancies.

It is important to note the similar ranking of characteristics which contributed to the global S-I discrepancies of all groups. By examining Table 2 one can observe that all groups expressed a desire to be less self-effacing, less distrustful, and less rebellious while being more conventional and responsible. Priests were slightly different from other groups in the sense that they had more of most traits than they deemed desirable. In particular, they expressed a need to be less narcissistic whereas all other groups felt that it would be ideal to have more of that trait. While the similarities noted may be an indication of the influence of a social-desirability factor, these results suggest the possibility that diverse groups of individuals are basically similar with regards to the traits about which they feel discrepant. This thesis could be examined by a closer analysis of trait discrepancies for a larger number of groups.

The differences observed in S-I congruence for the four vocational groups offer support to those writers who have suggested that there are conceptual similarities between vocational interest and

personality (Seiss and Jackson, 1970) or who believe that vocational choice is the implementation of self concept and self-regard (Becker and Strauss, 1956; Thompson, 1960). It would be relevant to replicate the present study in a different cultural setting paying closer attention to pre and post - training concepts of self, age, socio-economic background and so forth. For example, it might be interesting to examine relationships between adjustment measures on some personality inventory, self-ideal congruence, and vocational choice. In this way some clarification about whether priests' high S-I discrepancies were related to their idiosyncratic concern with the imperfection of man. Similarly, such research might reveal whether there is truth to the assertion that vocational choices and interests are "part and parcel of the individual's total striving for adjustment and grow out of needs arising in his personality development" (Darley and Hagenah, 1955, p. 263).

Summary

A review of the research literature indicated that self-ideal-self (S-I) congruence variables have been related to measures of self-acceptance, adjustment, flexibility, and performance. A lack of information was noted with regard to the availability of normative data collected by administering the Interpersonal Check List for sets of "self" and "ideal-self" to 584 subjects in five functionally different groups. Significant differences in congruence between groups were found. Implications for S-I congruence, personality, and vocational research were also discussed. Normative data for ICL self and ideal-self concepts was also presented in an appendix to the paper.

Footnotes

- 1 Data for the cadet officer sample was collected by Captain E. Bain under the supervision of Dr. E. L. Eberlein in preparation for an unpublished Masters Thesis (University of Alberta).
- 2 The distances between two vectors with n-components in n-dimensional Euclidean space can be determined by vector analysis techniques. In the present study S-I discrepancies were calculated with the following formula:

$$|S-I| = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n (S_i - I_i)^2 \right]^{1/2}$$

S and I are vectors of self and ideal-self concept scores respectively. High S-I discrepancies are associated with low S-I congruence and low S-I discrepancies are associated with high S-I congruences.

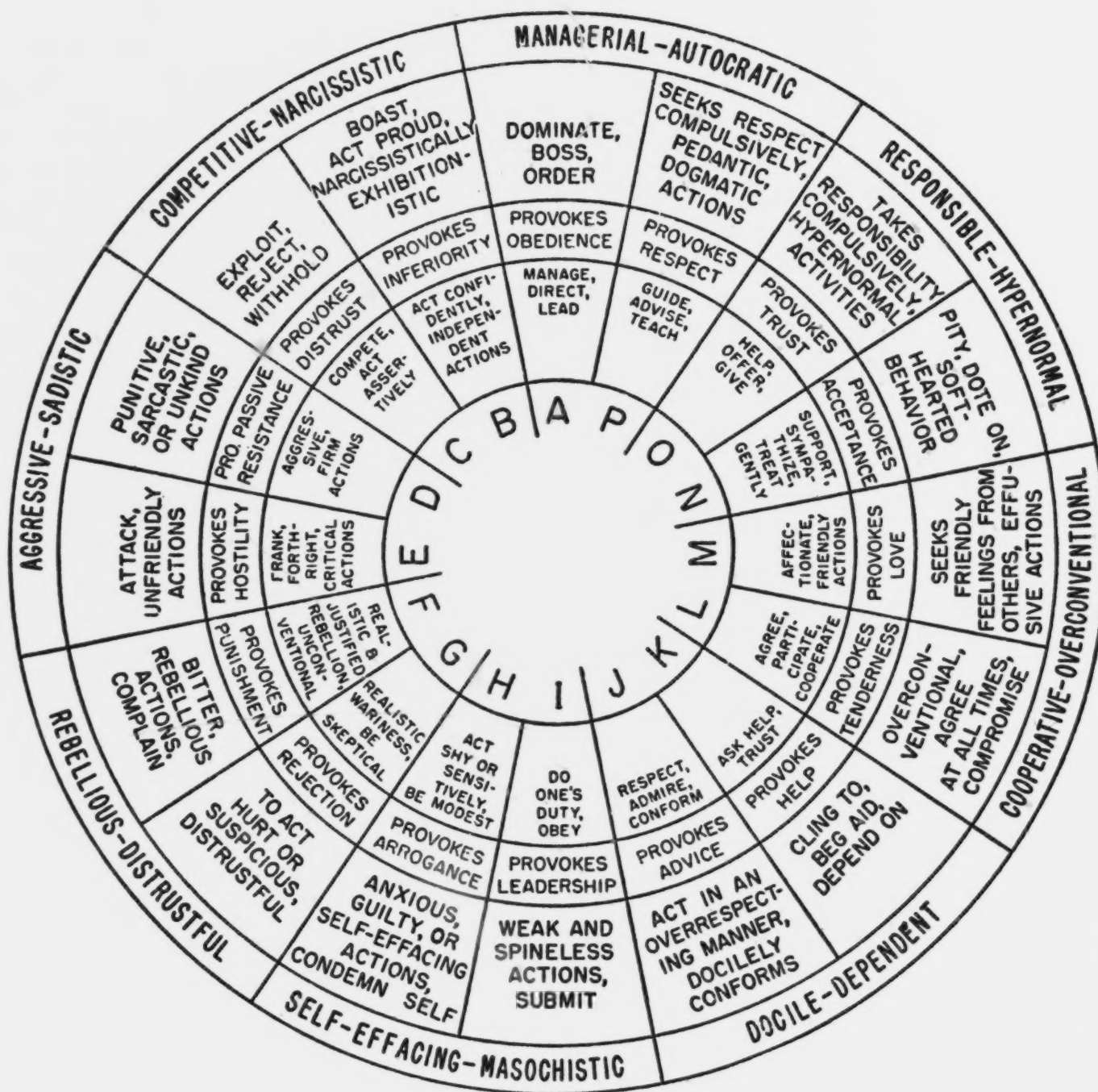


FIGURE 1. Classification of Interpersonal Behavior into Sixteen Mechanisms or Reflexes. Each of the sixteen interpersonal variables is illustrated by sample behaviors. The inner circle presents illustrations of adaptive reflexes, e.g., for the variable *A*, *manage*. The center ring indicates the type of behavior that this interpersonal reflex tends to "pull" from the other one. Thus we see that the person who uses the reflex *A* tends to provoke others to *obedience*, etc. These findings involve two-way interpersonal phenomena (what the subject does and what the "Other" does back) and are therefore less reliable than the other interpersonal codes presented in this figure. The next circle illustrates extreme or rigid reflexes, e.g., *dominates*. The perimeter of the circle is divided into eight general categories employed in *interpersonal diagnosis*. Each category has a moderate (adaptive) and an extreme (pathological) intensity, e.g., *Managerial-Autocratic*.

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Table 1

Self-Ideal discrepancy scores for five samples groups and resulting significant differences from Sheffe Multiple comparison of means.

Group	N	Mean	S.D.
Counsellors in training	121	16.80	7.09
Teachers in training	307	19.07	6.52
Priests	25	22.17	7.00
High School Students	67	19.94	5.45
Army Officer Cadets	64	16.60	6.04
Total all groups	584	18.56	6.62

- Notes: 1. Analysis of Variance yielded $F=6.84$, $p=.000$
2. Sheffe comparison yielded significance at .05 level:
- a) Counsellors differed from teachers, priests, high school students.
 - b) Priests differed from army officer cadets.

Table 2

Rank-Order of Five Sample Groups' Self-Ideal Discrepancy on 16 ICL Dimensions Scores from Most to Least Discrepart

Counsellors in training	Teachers in training	Priests	High School Students	Cadets			
A. Self Higher Than Ideal							
Rank	Dimension	Rank	Dimension	Rank	Dimension		
1	Self-effacing	2	Self-effacing	1	Distrustful	2	Distrustful
3	Distrustful	3	Distrustful	3	Self-effacing	3	Self-effacing
4	Rebellious	4	Rebellious	4	Rebellious	4	Rebellious
6	Dependent	5	Masochistic	6	Sadistic	5	Dependent
7	Masochistic	6	Dependent	7	Narcissistic	7	Masochistic
8	Aggressive	7	Docile	8	Aggressive	9	Sadistic
9	Docile	8	Aggressive	9	Competitive	13	Docile
11	Sadistic	10	Sadistic	10	Masochistic	14	Aggressive
15	Competitive	14	Cooperative	11	Autocratic		
		15	Competitive	12	Dependent		
		16	Managerial	14	Cooperative		
				16	Managerial		
B. Ideal Higher Than Self							
Rank	Dimension	Rank	Dimension	Rank	Dimension		
2	Over conventional	1	Over conventional	1	Over conventional		
5	Responsible	5	Responsible	6	Managerial		
10	Hyper-normal	13	Hyper-normal	8	Autocratic		
12	Autocratic	15	Docile	10	Responsible		
13	Managerial			11	Hyper-normal		
14	Narcissistic			12	Competitive		
16	Cooperative			15	Cooperative		
				16	Narcissistic		

Table 3

Normative data for self and ideal
on ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimensions for
121 counsellor trainees.

Variable	SELF		IDEAL	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
A	7.32	5.17	7.85	2.68
B	7.70	3.76	8.08	2.16
C	5.69	3.10	5.58	2.22
D	8.19	3.82	7.46	2.80
E	6.37	4.07	5.24	2.57
F	5.61	4.06	2.79	2.11
G	6.25	4.27	2.26	2.23
H	6.72	4.63	2.37	2.03
I	5.42	3.81	3.81	2.22
J	6.84	3.99	5.53	2.94
K	8.07	3.61	6.43	3.00
L	6.20	3.60	6.24	3.13
M	9.14	4.92	13.06	4.92
N	9.96	4.55	10.72	3.77
O	6.81	4.20	9.13	3.59
P	8.83	3.83	9.50	2.89
PA	16.15	7.95	17.35	4.67
BC	13.40	5.98	13.66	3.46
DE	14.56	6.93	12.70	4.32
FG	11.86	7.44	5.04	3.79
HI	12.14	7.38	6.18	3.36
JK	14.92	6.71	11.96	5.20
LM	15.35	7.62	19.30	7.35
NO	16.77	7.65	19.85	6.17
Factor I Docility	33.26	14.84	24.38	8.91
Factor II Rebellious- ness	33.14	15.46	20.12	8.13
Factor III Competition	37.74	14.72	38.47	8.80
Factor IV Responsi- bility	32.11	13.26	39.15	12.16

Table 4

Normative data for self and ideal on
ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimension for .307
teachers-in-training.

Variable	SELF		IDEAL	
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation
A	7.01	4.85	8.06	2.55
B	7.21	3.67	8.24	2.35
C	5.95	2.98	5.54	2.89
D	9.00	3.48	7.97	2.30
E	6.98	3.77	5.24	2.34
F	5.54	3.72	2.80	2.05
G	6.99	4.07	2.22	2.28
H	7.89	4.93	2.98	2.38
I	6.54	4.75	3.87	2.50
J	7.77	4.44	5.76	3.07
K	9.05	4.12	6.43	2.92
L	7.45	3.80	6.96	3.27
M	9.12	4.55	14.50	4.60
N	10.90	4.61	11.11	3.36
O	8.18	4.78	9.42	3.11
P	8.79	3.78	9.38	3.15
PA	15.81	7.22	17.44	4.59
BC	13.17	5.60	13.79	4.31
DE	15.98	6.04	13.20	3.62
FG	12.53	6.79	5.01	3.69
HI	14.43	8.70	6.86	4.07
JK	16.83	7.45	12.20	5.00
LM	16.57	7.08	21.47	6.90
NO	19.08	8.41	20.53	5.61
Factor I Docility	38.71	17.02	26.01	9.90
Factor II Rebellious- ness	36.40	12.64	21.21	7.32
Factor III Competi- tion	37.99	13.44	39.20	8.95
Factor IV Responsi- bility	35.65	13.77	42.00	11.06

Table 5

Normative data for self and ideal in
ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimensions for 25 priests.

Variable	SELF		IDEAL	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
A	8.16	5.33	7.96	1.87
B	8.72	4.51	6.40	1.47
C	7.12	3.94	5.40	1.88
D	9.00	4.93	6.28	1.51
E	7.00	2.68	5.12	1.88
F	7.48	4.22	2.28	1.15
G	7.20	4.30	0.96	1.11
H	9.60	4.40	2.32	1.43
I	7.00	4.63	5.68	1.97
J	7.20	4.78	7.52	2.94
K	7.60	3.45	6.48	2.33
L	8.76	3.84	8.24	2.44
M	10.40	5.10	18.28	2.76
N	11.76	4.79	12.76	2.82
O	7.32	4.95	10.64	3.73
P	10.44	4.86	9.20	3.01
PA	18.60	9.40	17.16	4.31
BC	15.84	6.76	11.80	2.79
DE	16.00	6.96	11.40	2.02
FG	14.68	7.57	3.24	1.75
HI	16.60	6.54	8.00	2.37
JK	14.80	6.82	14.00	4.53
LM	19.16	7.54	26.52	4.67
NO	19.08	8.26	23.40	5.25
FACTOR				
I-Docility	40.16	14.95	30.24	7.50
II-Rebelliousness	40.28	16.93	16.96	3.30
III-Competition	43.44	18.24	35.24	7.31
IV-Responsibility	38.24	14.19	49.92	9.10

Table 6

Normative data for self and ideal on
ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimensions for
67 Grade X high school students.

Variable	SELF		IDEAL	
	$\bar{x}$	S.D.	$\bar{x}$	S.D.
A	6.05	4.45	8.72	3.53
B	6.97	4.03	7.30	2.88
C	6.75	3.92	6.61	3.18
D	9.57	3.36	8.40	2.58
E	7.39	4.03	4.81	2.79
F	6.75	4.47	3.03	2.50
G	8.00	3.78	2.58	2.71
H	10.60	3.95	6.31	2.98
I	7.24	4.14	4.67	2.38
J	9.27	3.76	8.61	3.66
K	9.19	3.71	7.45	2.73
L	9.87	3.75	10.16	3.22
M	11.73	4.88	16.60	3.64
N	11.06	4.19	12.08	3.26
O	8.31	3.99	9.78	3.25
P	7.22	3.10	10.43	3.28
PA	13.27	5.78	19.15	6.11
BC	13.72	6.95	13.91	4.80
DE	16.96	6.24	13.21	4.16
FG	14.75	7.13	5.61	4.52
HI	17.84	6.96	10.99	4.26
JK	18.46	6.32	16.06	5.49
LM	21.60	7.40	26.76	5.93
NO	19.37	7.13	21.85	5.55
FACTOR				
I-Docility	46.16	13.98	37.21	10.38
II-Rebellious- ness	42.30	12.15	25.13	8.02
III-Competition	36.55	12.64	41.46	9.73
IV-Responsibi- lity	40.97	12.86	48.61	10.10

Table 7

Normative data for self and ideal on
ICL 16, 8 and 4 dimension for 64
Canadian Army Officer cadets

Variable	SELF		IDEAL	
	x	S.D.	x	S.D.
A	9.13	3.51	10.92	2.56
B	9.63	3.38	9.66	1.85
C	7.22	2.87	8.03	2.56
D	10.73	3.15	9.28	2.23
E	6.86	3.47	6.41	2.45
F	4.78	3.27	2.91	2.29
G	7.06	4.02	3.09	2.53
H	7.05	4.98	3.53	2.33
I	5.52	4.12	3.91	2.10
J	7.67	4.27	7.14	3.21
K	7.70	3.55	5.89	2.78
L	7.44	3.46	7.72	3.50
M	10.72	5.12	14.91	4.80
N	9.66	4.23	10.61	4.08
O	8.25	4.37	9.30	3.53
P	8.48	4.04	10.09	3.86
PA	17.61	6.29	21.02	5.30
BC	16.84	5.10	17.69	3.30
DE	17.59	5.64	15.69	3.54
FG	11.84	6.49	6.00	3.79
HI	12.56	8.50	7.44	3.88
JK	15.38	6.82	13.03	4.92
LM	18.16	7.43	22.63	7.76
NO	17.91	7.24	19.91	6.63
FACTOR				
I-Docility	35.38	15.96	28.19	9.25
II-Rebelliousness	36.48	12.19	25.22	6.98
III-Competition	45.19	10.88	47.98	7.87
IV-Responsibility	36.06	13.25	42.53	13.05